

Message Text

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73

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 RSR-01 /071 W

----- 063281

R 141200 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5092

INFO AMEMBASSY BATHURST

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, NG, NI

SUBJECT: SEC GEN OF NIGER- NIGERIAN JOINT COMMISSIONS

REF: FREETOWN 388

1. APPRECIATE THIS INFO. APPOINTMENT OF NIGERIAN SEC GEN FOR NIGER- NIGERIAN JOINT COMMISSIONS SET- UP IN NIAMEY HAS BEEN LONG- PENDING, INDEED SINCE GOWON VISIT TO NIGER IN MARCH 1971. LACK OF SUCH AN OFFICER HAS UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRIBUTED TO FACT THESE COMMISSIONS (WHICH WILL DEAL WITH VARIETY OF SUBJECT RANGING FROM LIVESTOCK TO CULTURAL RELATIONS) HAVE NOT REALLY GOTTEN OFF GROUND. CONVERSELY FILLING THIS POSITION SHOULD ACCELERATE PROGRESS IN WHOLE FIELD OF NIGER- NIGERIAN RELATIONS, WHICH ARE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO FORMER.

2. I TOOK OCCASION OF DINNER NIGHT MARCH 14 TO CHECK OUT THIS REPORTED APPOINTMENT WITH NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR KONTAGORA. HE SEEMED SURPRISED WE KNEW ABOUT IT, STATING HE HAD ONLY RECEIVED OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION HIMSELF DAY BEFORE. HE TOLD ME TAFWEA BALEWA, WHO IS NO RELATION TO LATE PM OF SAME NAME, BUT IS ALSO
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HAUSA, FROM BAUCHI, IS CURRENTLY NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO SENEGAL, ACCREDITED AS WELL TO THE GAMBIA AND MAURITANIA. ORIGINALLY A TEACHER, TAFEWA BALEWA HAS ALREADY HELD SEVERAL DIPLOMATIC POSTS INCLUDING ROME, BONN AND LONDON.

3. KONTAGORA DID NOT KNOW WHEN TAFEWA BALEWA WOULD ARRIVE, BUT CONFIDED TO ME THAT HE ASSUMED LATTER WOULD REPLACE HIM AS NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO NIGER (HE HAS BEEN HERE OVER 3 YEARS NOW), SINCE PRESENCE IN NIAMEY OF NIGERIAN SEC GEN RESPONSIBLE FOR SUBSTANTIVE WORK OF JOINT COMMISSIONS AND HAVING READY ACCESS TO PRESIDENT DIORI WOULD NOT LEAVE MUCH ROOM, NOR INDEED NEED, FOR A SEPARATE AMBASSADOR. IN CIRCUMSTANCES IT SEEMED LOGICAL FOR TWO JOBS TO BE COMBINED. THIS VIEW WAS REINFORCED, HE SAID, BY LAGOS' ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO EXPAND EMBASSY STAFF BY 5 OR 6 POSITIONS LATER THIS YEAR. THESE WERE DECIDEDLY INTENDED TO SUPPORT NEW TAFEWA BALEWA ACTIVITIES.

3. KONTAGORA ADDED IT WAS TENTATIVE PLAN HOLD FIRST FORMAL MEETING OF JOINT NIGER- NIGERIAN COMMISSIONS IN NIAMEY DURING LAST WEEK IN MARCH, BUT HE PERSONALLY DOUBTED TAFEWA BALEWA COULD GET HERE BY THAT TIME.

5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY BACKGROUND INFO ADDRESSEE POSTS COULD GIVE US ON AMBASSADOR TAFEWA BALEWA.
MCCLELLAND

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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